

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: DECONTROL AFTER ONE YEAR

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: METAL WORKERS BARGAINING

1. SUMMARY: A FOUR DAY CONFERENCE OF ITALY'S THREE MAJOR METAL WORKERS UNIONS OPENED NOVEMBER 13. THE CONFERENCE WILL ADOPT A FINAL BARGAINING PLATFORM. THE OPENING PRESENTATION, ON BEHALF OF THE THREE UNIONS, WAS A HIGHLY COMBATTIVE, POLEMICAL SPEECH BY CISL METAL WORKERS CHIEF BENTIVOGLI THERE ARE INDICATIONS, HOWEVER, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS THE CURRENT COMMUNIST DEDICATION TO A MODERATE POSITION, THAT THE PLATFORM WHICH EMERGES ON SUNDAY WILL MAKE POSSIBLE AN ULTIMATE AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE TRIENNIAL CONTRACT WHICH EXPIRES AT YEAREND, END SUMMARY.

2. THE THREE MAJOR ITALIAN METAL WORKERS UNIONS, UNIFIED WITHIN THE CCU CONFIGURATION AS THE LABOR FEDERATION OF METAL WORKERS (FLM), ARE MEETING IN MILAN TO HAMMER OUT THEIR FINAL PLATFORM FOR THE RENEWAL OF THEIR TRIENNIAL LABOR CONTRACT. SIFTING THROUGH THE HEAVY DIALECTICAL VERBIAGE DELIVERED ON THE OPENING DAY, ON BEHALF OF THE FLM, BY FRANCO BENTIVOGLI, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CISL

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METAL WORKERS UNION, A TOUGH FLM ATTITUDE WOULD SEEM TO BE

INDICATED IN CONFRONTINGMANAGEMENT FOR THE CONTRACT RENEWAL. (SAMPLE BENTIVOGLI STATEMENT: TO EMERGE FROM THE CURRENT CRISIS, QUOTE ONE MUST ABANDON THE LOGIC OF THE CAPITALIST COUNTRIES OF THE WEST AND NEED INSTEAD TO OPEN NEW CONTACTS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF THE EAST AND THE THIRD WORLD. UNQUOTE)

3. THERE IS AT LEAST ONE CLUE, HOWEVER, WHICH INDICATES THAT THE FLM POSITION WILL BE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN BENTIVOGLI'S LANGUAGE WOULD LEAD ONE TO EXPECT: THE PREVIOUS INSISTENCE BY CERTAIN MILITANT ELEMENTS IN THE FLM FOR DEMANDING WAGE INCREASES OF 35,000 LIRE PER MONTH (675 LIRE EQUALS \$1.00) SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DROPPED. BENTIVOGLI'S SPEECH CONTAINS A DEMAND FOR AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD INCREASE OF 30,000 LIRE MONTHLY.

4. ANOTHER MAJOR MODIFIER IS THE AGREEMENT REACHED NOVEMBER 8 BETWEEN THE FLM AND FIAT. THIS AGREEMENT, WHICH DEALS WITH WORKING CONDITIONS, PROVIDES FOR THE FOLLOWING: THE JOBS OF ALL FIAT EMPLOYEES ARE GUARANTEED THROUGH 1976; MANAGEMENT REAFFIRMS ITS PREVIOUS AGREEMENT TO STEP UP INVESTMENTS IN THE SOUTH, SPECIFICALLY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FACILITY TO MANUFACTURE BUSES AT GROTTAMINARDA (NEAR AVELLINO); FIAT PLEDGES TO HIRE SOME 2350 NEW WORKERS IN 1976; WORK HOURS WILL BE MODESTLY REDUCED THROUGH THE EXTENSION OF SOME PAID HOLIDAY PERIODS; A CERTAIN NUMBER OF WORKERS WILL BE TRANSFERRED WITHIN THE FIAT COMPLEX IN THE INTEREST OF EFFICIENCY. SINCE FIAT IS BY FAR THE LARGEST EMPLOYER IN THE METAL TRADES, THE AGREEMENT IS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN TO BE APPLIED, WITH APPROPRIATE ADAPTATION, TO THE METAL SECTOR AT LARGE.

5. COMMENT: AS SO OFTEN IN THE RECENT PAST, THE COMMUNISTS IN THE MILAN MEETING ARE ASSUMING THE ROLE OF MODERATION. BENTIVOGLI HAS DELIVERED THE OPENING STATEMENT; UIL METAL WORKERS SECRETARY GENERAL BENVENUTO WILL DELIVER THE SUMMARY REMARKS ON SUNDAY. THE COMMUNISTS, IN THE MEANTIME, WILL BE SQUEEZING ARMS IN ORDER TO MODERATE THE MORE EXCESSIVE TENDENCIES AND TO INCORPORATE THE CCU EMPHASIS ON JOB SECURITY PROVISIONS. AS TO THE FIAT AGREEMENT, IT APPEARS MORE GENEROUS TO LABOR THAN IT REALLY IS. FOR EXAMPLE, FIAT'S NORMAL ANNUAL ATTRITION RATE IS ABOUT TWICE THE NUMBER THAT FIAT HAS PLEDGED TO HIRE. UNION AGREEMENT TO ALLOW THE REASSIGNMENT OF SOME WORKERS MAY WELL TURN OUT TO BE THE MOST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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